

CLAIMS:

5 1. A delivery scheduling and updating system comprising:
a delivery scheduling computer electronically maintaining
real-time delivery schedule information and delivering a selected
portion of the information to a remote customer;

10 a user computer accessible to the remote customer for
receiving the selected portion of the delivery schedule
information and transmitting a delivery change request to the
delivery scheduling computer;

15 a network linking the delivery scheduling computer to the
user computer; and

20 a set of user application modules associated with the
delivery scheduling computer and user computer for allowing the
customer to view the selected portion of the delivery schedule
information and enter the delivery change request.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the selected portion of
the delivery schedule information comprises an estimated delivery
time and a delivery location.

25 3. The system of claim 2, wherein the delivery change
request includes a request to change the estimated delivery time.

4. The system of claim 2, wherein the delivery change
request includes a request to change the delivery location.

30 5. The system of claim 1, wherein the user computer is a
wired terminal.

6. The system of claim 1, wherein the user computer is a
wireless terminal.

7. The system of claim 1, wherein the user computer is a browser-based client.

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8. The system of claim 1 further including an employee computer accessible to a delivery employee for receiving the real-time delivery schedule information from the delivery scheduling computer, wherein the network links the delivery scheduling computer to the employee computer.

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9. The system of claim 8, wherein the employee computer transmits a delivery completion message to the delivery scheduling computer upon completion of a scheduled delivery, the delivery completion message including an actual delivery time.

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10. The system of claim 9, wherein the delivery scheduling computer updates the estimated delivery time of remaining deliveries based on the actual delivery time.

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11. A delivery scheduling and updating system comprising:
a delivery scheduling computer electronically maintaining real-time delivery schedule information and transmitting the real-time delivery schedule information to a delivery employee, the delivery scheduling computer further transmitting a selected portion of the delivery schedule information to a remote customer, the selected portion of the delivery schedule information notifying the customer of a scheduled delivery;

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an employee computer accessible to the delivery employee for receiving the real-time delivery schedule information from the delivery scheduling computer and for transmitting a delivery completion message to the delivery scheduling computer upon completion of the scheduled delivery, the delivery completion message including an actual delivery time; and

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a user computer accessible to the remote customer for receiving the selected portion of the delivery schedule information from the delivery scheduling computer;

a set of user application modules associated with the delivery scheduling computer and the user computer for allowing the customer to view the selected portion of the delivery schedule information.

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12. The system of claim 11, wherein the selected portion of the delivery schedule information comprises an estimated delivery time and a delivery location.

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13. The system of claim 12, wherein the delivery scheduling computer receives the delivery completion message and updates the estimated delivery time of remaining deliveries based on the actual delivery time included in the delivery completion message.

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14. The system of claim 11, wherein the employee computer is a wired terminal.

15. The system of claim 11, wherein the employee computer is a wireless terminal.

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16. The system of claim 11, wherein the employee computer is a browser-based client.

17. A delivery notification computer in a computer network enabling communication with a remote customer and a remote delivery employee, the delivery notification computer comprising:
a memory for storing real-time delivery schedule information;

a processor coupled to the memory for creating and updating the real-time delivery schedule information;

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a network connection coupled to the processor for transmitting a selected portion of the delivery schedule information to the remote customer and for receiving a delivery change request from the customer; and

a set of user application modules for allowing the customer to view the selected portion of the delivery schedule information and enter the delivery change request.

10 18. The delivery notification computer of claim 17, wherein the network connection further receives a delivery completion message from the remote delivery employee upon completion of the scheduled delivery, and wherein the processor updates the
15 estimated delivery time of remaining deliveries based on the actual delivery time.

19. A delivery notification computer in a computer network enabling communication with a remote customer, the delivery notification computer comprising:

a memory for storing real-time delivery schedule information;

a network connection coupled to the memory for transmitting the real-time delivery schedule information to a delivery employee and a selected portion of the delivery schedule information to a remote customer, the selected portion of the delivery schedule information notifying the customer of a scheduled delivery, the network connection further receiving a delivery completion message from the delivery employee upon
25 completion of the scheduled delivery, the delivery completion message including an actual delivery time;

a processor coupled to the memory and the network connection for creating the real-time delivery schedule information and updating portions of the delivery schedule information based on
35 the actual delivery time.

20. A delivery notification computer in a computer network enabling communication with a remote customer and a remote delivery employee, the delivery notification computer comprising:
5 means for creating delivery schedule information for a plurality of deliveries;

means for updating the delivery schedule information for real-time maintenance of the delivery schedule information;

10 means for transmitting a selected portion of the delivery schedule information to a remote customer, the selected portion of the delivery schedule information notifying the customer of a scheduled delivery; and

15 means for receiving a delivery change request from the customer for modifying the delivery schedule information.

21. The computer of claim 20, wherein the means for creating the delivery schedule information comprises means for creating the delivery schedule information based on a shortest-path algorithm.
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22. The computer of claim 20, wherein the delivery change request includes a request to change the estimated delivery time.

23. The computer of claim 20, wherein the delivery change request includes a request to change the delivery location.
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24. The computer of claim 20 further comprising means for recalculating a delivery cost based on the delivery change request.
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25. The computer of claim 20 further comprising means for transmitting the delivery schedule information to a delivery employee.
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26. The computer of claim 25 further comprising means for receiving a delivery completion message of a particular delivery
5 from the delivery employee, the delivery completion message including an actual delivery time.

27. The computer of claim 20 wherein the means for transmitting further comprises means for determining when the
10 selected portion of the delivery schedule information is to be transmitted to the remote customer.

28. A delivery scheduling and updating method comprising:
15 creating a delivery schedule for a plurality of deliveries;
updating the delivery schedule for real-time maintenance of the delivery schedule;

transmitting a selected portion of the delivery schedule to a remote customer, the selected portion of the delivery schedule notifying the customer of a scheduled delivery;

20 receiving a delivery change request from the customer; and
modifying the delivery schedule based on the delivery change request.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the creating the
25 delivery schedule information comprises creating the delivery schedule information based on a shortest-path algorithm.

30 . The method of claim 28, wherein the delivery change request includes a request to change the estimated delivery time.

31. The method of claim 28, wherein the delivery change request includes a request to change the delivery location.

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5 32. The method of claim 28 further comprising the step of
recalculating a delivery cost based on the delivery change
request.

33. The method of claim 28 further comprising transmitting
the delivery schedule information to a delivery employee.

10 34. The method of claim 33 further comprising receiving a
delivery completion message of a particular delivery from the
delivery employee, the delivery completion message including an
actual delivery time.

15 35. The method of claim 34 further comprising modifying the
delivery schedule information based on the actual delivery time.

20 36. The method of claim 28 further comprising determining
when the selected portion of the delivery schedule information
is to be transmitted to the remote customer.

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